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No. 2 Sanitary Area.

**AXMINSTER
RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.**

REPORT

OF

Medical Officer of Health

1938.

No. 2 Sanitary Area.

comprising :-

AXMINSTER RURAL.

AXMINSTER URBAN.

HONITON BOROUGH.

HONITON RURAL.

SEATON URBAN.

AXMINSTER RURAL.

Clerk to the Council :

CECIL FORWARD ESQ.,

Telephone Axminster 3281.

Medical Officer of Health :

Dr. DUNCOMBE STEELE PERKINS,

Telephone Honiton 234.

Sanitary Inspector :

Mr. W. H. BIGGS.

Telephone Axminster 3171.



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MEDICAL OFFICER'S REPORT.

AXMINSTER,

January, 1939.

To The Chairman and Members of the
Axminster Rural District Council.

Gentlemen,

I have much pleasure in presenting my Annual Report which deals with Public Health matters and the Sanitary Administration of your District for the Year 1938.

As you are aware on Oct. 1st 1938, Axminster Rural District was included in No. 2 Sanitary Area, and I had the honour of being appointed Medical Officer of Health for the combined Districts.

The only difference this makes, is that you have now a Medical Officer of Health, who is not engaged in Private Practice, and who is at the same time, directly responsible to each Council.

It must be remembered in producing this report, that I am rather at a disadvantage, as I have to depend on others for the period of the first nine months of 1938.

Natural and Social Conditions of the Rural District.

Area 51468 acres.

Population 10210.

Number of Inhabited Houses 3332.

Rateable Value £47,969.

Sum represented by a penny rate £200 (net).

The Chief occupation of the District is Agriculture and Dairy Farming.

I am very glad to report, that the general health of the Distriet during 1938 was on the whole very good.

During the early months of the year, Influenza of a very mild type made its annual appearance, but no deaths were registered from this disease. On the other hand there were 5 deaths from Pneumonia, which may have been Influenza in origin.

We have been able to record a very satisfactory year as regards Infectious Disease. There were 10 cases of a very mild type of Scarlet Fever notified, occurring in the following parishes :-

March, two cases at Kilmington and one at Dalwood.

June, one case at Musbury.

September, one case at Stockland.

October, two cases at Colyton.

November, two cases at Colyton.

December, one case at Colyton.

There was also one case of Diphtheria reported in January at Dalwood, and a case of Enteric Fever at Stoney Bridges, evidently in this case, the infection came from the Urban Distriet, which at that time was experiencing a small outbreak of Enteric Fever in its boundaries.

It is very difficult to trace the source of Infection in these sporadic outbreaks of Scarlet Fever, and as you will note, they occurred over a wide area and a lengthy period.

Practically all these cases were sent to Whipton Isolation Hospital and the premises were thoroughly disinfected, and at no time, did there appear a risk of a serious outbreak, I am glad to report that all cases quickly recovered.

The type of Scarlet Fever which seems to prevail now-a-day, is generally very mild, and I regard Measles today, are a much more serious complaint.

I note with great satisfaction, that the complications after child birth such as Puerpural Fever are practically absent in your District, and to this, I think great credit must be given to the District Nurses in the Axminster Rural District. There was only one case of Puerpural Pyrexia reported in the District, and I think that alone, speaks highly of the Nursing Services established in your Area.

WATER SUPPLIES.

As far as I have been able, I have visited most of the Rural Water Supplies in the District, and on the whole they are satisfactory, the following are the exceptions, and steps in hand to provide proper supplies.

Kilminster.

This Hamlet has a population of 521, and the present supplies are by means of well only. There is no doubt, a piped supply could be very easily obtained for this Parish, and I consider it is urgently needed. There are very few parishes today, with a population of 500, who have not a proper water supply.

A scheme is being prepared, and subject to the dry weather flow and Analysis being satisfactory, I think Kilminster can look forward to soon having a supply.

Hawkchurch.

This Hamlet with a population of 490, has to depend on wells, and a scheme is now in hand for providing a piped supply.

This I hope will be completed in the near future.

Musbury.

This Hamlet has a population of 392, and a scheme is in hand for providing a proper supply.

DRAINAGE & SEWERAGE.

Uplyme.

Steps are being taken to provide a proper sewerage Scheme for Uplyme, but the difficulty in producing a Scheme to have its outfall in the Sea, is that we shall have to pass through Lyme Regis, and at the present moment, our neighbours have not consented to this.

Failing this agreement with the Lyme Regis Council, we should have to construct our own works, which under the present circumstances, would be unfortunate, and bound to depreciate the land in the near neighbourhood, as building sites.

This area of Uplyme is fast developing, and it would be a thousand pities, if the sewer was not extended to the Sea.

At the present moment, I give a summary of the houses which would connect up.

Houses connected to existing Sewer	17
Houses provided with Pail Closets	15
Houses connected to cesspools	120
Houses connected to cesspools (Lane End many more building sites)	5
Yawl, Houses connected to cesspools	36
Total No. of Houses	193
Council Houses to be erected at Wally Lane	8
The School	1
Village Hall	1
Combined Total	203

Besides the before-mentioned, the 18 Council Houses in Walley Lane (2 of which have been sold) are provided with Pail Closets, and properly constructed Cesspools for sink and Bath Water. At the time of building these cottages, the water supply was from a well.

MILK SUPPLIES.

During the Year constant examination of the Milk Supplies, have shown that on the whole, the milk supplied to the inhabitants is of a high standard.

Cleanliness.

The number of samples taken for examination was 596, and of these 372 proved satisfactory.

Tuberculosis.

The number of samples examined was 84, and of these 80 proved satisfactory.

Vital Statistics.

BIRTH RATE TABLE.

The number of Births registered were 132.

1937.—12·5 per 1000 of the population.

1938.—13·1 „ „ „

As you will see by the above Table, the Birth rate shows an increase over 1937, which latter I introduce for comparison.

During 1938, there were 6 illegitimate Births as against 7 in 1937.

In addition I beg to report 5 still births.

(Legitimate)

DEATH RATE TABLE.

The number of Deaths registered from all causes were 125 as compared with 142 in 1937.

This is a considerable decrease on 1937, and included 67 males and 58 females.

1937—14.1 per 1000 of population.

1938—12.2 ,, ,,

Infantile Mortality.

The number of deaths (under 1 year) registered were 3.

Pulmonary Tuberculosis.

The number of deaths registered from Pulmonary Tuberculosis 6, and one death from Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis.

Deaths from Cancer.

The number of Deaths from Cancer registered were 17, as compared with 21 in 1937.

Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age.

	Males.	Females.
Legitimate	3	0
Illegitimate	0	0
Total	3	0

Live Births.

Legitimate	126
Illegitimate	6
Total	132

Still Births.

Legitimate	5
Illegitimate	0
Total	5

Causes of Death Table.

	MALES	FEMALES
All Causes	67	58
Other Liver Dis.	0	1
Other Digve. Dis.	1	2
Ac. & Chr. Nephritis	2	6
Other Puer. Dis.	0	1
Con. Deb. & Prem. Birth	1	0
Senilty	1	0
Suicide	4	0
Other Violence	1	2
Other Defd. Dis.	7	3
Diabetes	0	3
Cerebral Haem.	6	7
Heart Dis.	20	15
Other Circ. Dis.	4	2
Bronchitis	1	2
Pneumonia	4	1
Other Resp. Dis.	1	1
Peptic Ulcer	2	0
Tuberc. Resp. System	4	2
Other Tuberculosis	1	0
Cancer	7	10
Total	67	58

General Provision of Health Services for the Area.

Hospitals provided by the Local Authority or County Council.

Tuberculosis.

Provided by the County Council.

Small Pox.

Provided by the County Council.

Maternity.

There is no Hospital provided for Maternity cases, but cases may be sent to the Honiton Infirmary.

Fever.

All cases requiring treatment are sent to the Exeter Isolation Hospital at Whipton, The Council having an agreement with Exeter City Council to take all cases requiring removal.

Other Hospitals.

Cases are taken at the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital, The Eye Infirmary, Exeter, and the Cottage Hospitals at Axminster, Chard and Lyme Regis, all of whom admit cases from the Rural District.

Unmarried Mothers.

There is no provision made for the unmarried mother, and the cases have to go to the Honiton Public Assistance Institution at Honiton. This Institution will also take the Illegitimate Infants and homeless children.

Ambulance Facilities.

All infectious cases are removed by the Ambulance from Whipton Hospital.

Non-Infectious cases are removed by the St. John Ambulance Division stationed at Axminster, or the Red Cross Ambulance stationed at Honiton.

Clinics & Treatment Centres.

Orthopædic Clinic at Honiton.

Treatment centre at Exeter for Venereal Disease.

Tuberculosis at Ivy Bank, Exeter.

No Immunization Clinic for Diphtheria has been established as yet.

The Medical Officer of Health is now a whole time Official for No. 2 Sanitary Area, but directly responsible to each Council.

The Sanitary Inspector is a whole time Official.

Half Salaries are paid by the Devon County Council.

Professional Nursing in the Home.

District Nurses are employed by the Nursing Associations for Maternity and general Nursing at home, with Infectious cases excepted.

There is no provision made for Nursing Infectious cases at home, and the District Nurses are not allowed to do this work.

Midwives.

The control and inspection of Midwives is now undertaken by the County Council.

Prevalence of and Control over Infectious Disease.

Diphtheria Antitoxin is used by all the Medical Practitioners in this Area, and is issued free to those, who cannot afford to pay for a supply.

The County Authorities undertake the Bacteriological Work for the District.

20 cases as Tabulated overleaf were notified during 1938.

Notifiable Diseases (other than Tuberculosis) during the year 1938

Diseases.	Total cases notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital	Total Deaths
Small Pox	Nil		
Scarlet Fever	10	9	
Diphtheria	1	1	
Enteric Fever (including Paratyphoid)	1	1	
Pneumonia	4	0	5
Puerperal Sepsis or Pyrexia.	1		1 case not notified.
Erysipelas	3		

The Sanitary Inspector disinfects after infectious diseases.

No use has been made of the Schick or Dick tests or artificial methods of immunization.

No primary vaccinations or re-vaccinations have been performed by the Medical Officer of Health under the Public Health (Small-pox Prevention) Regulation 1917.

Non-Notifiable Disease. This is rather difficult to report on as the only basis to go on, are the reports of absence from Schools, supplied by the Head Teacher, and I have no statistics to work upon, for the period under review.

All arrangements for Treatment of Tubercular Patients, who desire Sanatorium treatment, are made by the County Authorities.

I append the Tabulated report of the Sanitary Inspector.

Your Obedient Servant,

DUNCOMBE STEELE PERKINS,

Medical Officer of Health.

SANITARY INSPECTOR'S RETURN.

Inspection and Supervision of Food.

Meat and other Foods.

Number of pounds of Meat surrendered—2000 lbs.

Visits to Slaughter Houses—468.

The Slaughter-houses consist of 9 Registered Slaughter Houses.

Beasts inspected :-

Bovines :	Cows	156
	Cattle	20
Calves		25
Sheep		689
Pigs		466

Meat Surrendered :-

	T.B.	Other Disease & conditions.	Total.
	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.
Beef	120		120
Pork	1500	300	1800
Mutton		12	12
Offals	26	42	68
Totals	1646	354	2000

Other Meat surrendered—26 Rabbits and 56 Fowls.

Milk Sampling.

Total number of Samples taken during (Accredited) year—470.

Number Satisfactory 272.

Number of T.T. Samples taken during (Accredited) year—126.

Number Satisfactory 100.

Number of T.B. Samples taken by D.C.C. —84.

Number Satisfactory 80.

Total number of Visits to Farms 436.

Milk Samples.—Jan. to March 116. April to June 127.

July to Sept. 208. Oct. to Dec. 145.

Number of Cowkeepers or Dairymen on Register at end of year—479.

Number registered as producer-retailer	60.
“ “ “ producer-wholesaler	419.
“ “ “ producer-wholesaler & retailer	42.
“ “ “ retailer only	Nil.

Bakehouses.

Number in District 13.

Number of visits 13.

Water Sampling.

Samples taken 62. Satisfactory 41. Doubtful 6. Failures 15.

Infectious Disease.

Number of Houses disinfected for :-

(1) Scarlet Fever	10
(2) T.B.	3
(3) Typhoid	1
(4) Diphtheria	1
(5) Cancer	1
(6) Dysentery	4

Plans (Submitted and Past).

New Buildings	41
Additions, Alterations & Extensions	25
Garages	12
Conversions	3

Small Outbuildings and Stores	2
Reconditions & Rebuilding	2
Lay-Outs	1

Tabulated Statement.

Drains tested	103
Drains made good	1
Drains relaid	4
Cesspits repaired	Nil
Sinks provided	10
Floors repaired	6
Stoves Repaired	5
Windows repaired	12
Rooms cleansed	15
Yards paved	7
External Walls Roughcasted	10
Roofs repaired	8
Ceilings repaired	6
New Gullies provided	2
Ashbins provided	12
W.C.'s repaired	3
Flushing Cisterns provided	3
Larders provided	8
Privies provided	6

